

Amendments to the Claims:

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and Listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): The method of altering a fluid-borne contaminant, comprising the steps of:

providing a positive-displacement pump having an inlet and an outlet;
connecting said pump inlet to a source of contaminated fluid;
operating said pump at a pressure ratio ~~of at least 2.0 so as to sufficiently~~ sufficient to
elevate the pressure and temperature of the fluid and contaminants passing through said pump;
~~and controlling the time during which the temperature of said fluid and contaminants are~~
~~elevated; thereby~~ to alter substantially all of said contaminants passing through said pump.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said contaminants are altered by chemical reduction.

Claim 3 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said contaminants are altered by oxidation.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said contaminants are altered by combustion.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said contaminants include a particle.

Claim 6 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said contaminants include a biological agent.

Claim 7 (original): The method as set forth in claim 6 wherein said biological agent is selected from the group consisting of: a spore, a bacteria, a virus, a pathogen, a fungus, and a pollen.

Claim 8 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said fluid includes a compressible gas.

Claim 9 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein at least some of said contaminants are entrained in said gas.

Claim 10 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said pump is a Roots-type positive displacement pump.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said pump is a compressor.

Claim 12 (withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said pump includes a piston-and-cylinder.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein ~~said pressure ratio is~~ the pressure at said pump outlet divided by the pressure at said pump inlet is at least 2.0.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ the time during which the temperature of said fluid and contaminants is elevated is controlled by restricting the flow of fluid and contaminants passing through said pump.

Claim 15 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the temperature of said fluid and contaminants is heated to at least about 200° C. at said pump outlet.

Claim 16 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein said pump is a first pump, and further comprising the additional steps of:
 providing a second pump; and
 causing contaminated fluid from said source to pass sequentially through said pumps.

Claim 17 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1, and further comprising the additional step of:
 preheating the temperature of the fluid entering said pump with heat provided from the temperature of fluid exiting said pump.

Claim 18 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein a fuel is entrained in the fluid supplied to said pump.

Claim 19 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein a reagent is entrained in the fluid supplied to said pump.

Claim 20 (original): The method as set forth in claim 1, and further comprising the additional steps of:
 sampling the fluid exiting said pump to determine the extent to which contaminants therein have been converted; and
 adjusting the operation of said pump so that substantially all of said contaminants are converted by passing such contaminated fluid through said pump.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The method of altering a fluid-borne contaminant, comprising the steps of:
 providing a positive-displacement pump having an inlet and an outlet;
 connecting said pump inlet to a source of contaminated fluid;

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operating said pump so as to elevate the temperature of the fluid and contaminants passing through said pump to at least about 200° C.; and

controlling the time during which the temperature of said fluid and contaminants are elevated;

thereby to alter substantially all of said contaminants passing through said pump.